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No. 153.

GUARDIAN SHADOWS.

An Old Man's Soliloquy.

BY TOM GOULD.

All alone how drear the feeling
As I pace the gloomy hall so drear,
Ever near me, stealthily stealing,
Moves my shadow on the wall.
Now 'tis here, anon 'tis gone;
Now advances on the right;
From me 'twill not part a sunder;
Everywhere it meets my sight.

Now it follows hard behind me,
As I near the swinging lamp,
Flits abreast, then darts before me,
Keeping time with silent tramp.

Till by feet its stature lengthened,
Stretches 'way along the floor!

Though by hundred it were strengthened,
Part would linger as before.

Through that shadow, far extending,
Didst thou not come to greet,
Yet a part would still low bending,
Crouch obedient at my feet.

Though this friend does not infuse me
With advice where I go,
Yet it never does mislead me,
As some other friends I know.

Ah, it points me back to childhood,
Where I first saw shadows fall,
O'er the fields, and through the wildwood
And upon my chamber wall.

Memory by this shadow shaken,
Doth those early scenes recall;
Glimpses from the bedclothes taken,
At those shadows on the wall.

How I've lain and wished for morrow,
Haunted by those specters tall;
From them now no fear I borrow,
They are shadows, that is all.

Chasing them across the meadows,
Then I lay down, I lay down,
Thus by day, those dreared shadows,
Were a source of pleasure made.

Stern was he who scanned our faces
As we passed him in the hall,
Smiled as we took our places,
Smiled he rarely, if at all.

Furtively we eyed his truncheon,
Then with such a studious men,
Watched the clock and wished for luncheon,
And oft snatched a bite unseen.

Hard board benches I remember,
Much too high above the floor;
Thumb-marked Colburn, torn and limber,
Told of tasks behind the door.

Through the western windows shining,
Nond too soon, each welcome ray
Fallen on us, didst thou bring,
Light and shadow as they lay.

Hands could never keep from stching
Faintest outlines round each ray;
We ne'er dreamed that we were sketching
Records of an idle day.

And when school-boy tasks were ended,
Lessons banished from the brain,
Through the lane our way we wended,
Chasing shadows home again.

Since then, all their ways have wended
Up to brighter scenes than all—
Yet, one lingers, I'm reminded
By that shadow on the wall.

Last to leave—oh, fairest schoolmate!
Once a sweetheart, once a wife,
Gladly would I call the mandate,
Seek with her eternal life.

Soon I too shall leave the willow,
Dropping meekly to the ground;
May these guardian shades then pillow
Them, upon my grassy mound.

For in death they can not fail;
Left with earthly things alone,
May they pause awhile in sorrow,
Hovering round the silent stone.

Rocky Mountain Rob,

THE CALIFORNIA OUTLAW;

OR,

The Vigilantes of Humbug Bar.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF THE "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND
KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES,"
"HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF
NEW YORK," "A STRANGE
GIRL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BELLES OF HUMBUG.

BESSIE SHOCK was a tall, fair-haired girl, with a round, good-natured-looking face, wherein shone a pair of clear blue eyes. She was the acknowledged belle of Humbug Bar. In fact, not a rival had she for fifty miles, north, south, east or west. A wholesome, buxom girl, quick in speech, and ready in reply. She attended to the hotel department of the Waterproof Saloon. Report stated that the blue-eyed Bessie had received an offer of marriage from every miner who had ever set foot in the Humbug Valley, and one and all she had laughed at, and made reply that they had better go back to their wives, whom they had abandoned—a reply which struck home five times out of ten, and made some grow red and others pale when the girl's answer brought back the memory of the days that were gone, and the joys—or sorrows—which they had left behind them.

Bessie had never a favorite in all the Humbug region.

In the expressive language of the Pacific Slope, she said that "all the men were first-class frauds, and that she didn't take any stock in them."

Bessie was a great favorite, though, with all the frequenters of the Waterproof Saloon.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon, on the same day that the events related in the preceding chapter took place. Bessie was sitting in the dining-room of the "Waterproof," an apartment rather limited in extent, but still quite big enough for the guests of Pop Shook, except on great festive occasions. She was looking out of the window at a jumping-match, which was in progress before the hotel, and in which the



"Hello, sport, don't shoot!" cried the stranger, holding up both his hands to show that he was weaponless.

But he was far from possessing Kidder's popularity. He was cold-blooded and merciless. Woe to the man who sat down to a quiet game with York. Not till his last dollar was gone did he yield up his prey, and then there was no giving the loser a few dollars back, to get him out of town, and start him afresh on his road, to try another "luck" with fortune. "Let him beg his way, the fool!" York would say, contemptuously, and light his cigar as coolly as though he had not brought a fellow-creature to ruin and despair.

Kidder was a different kind of man altogether. He was free and open-hearted, a favorite with all—men, women and children. Little by little York's reserve had disappeared, until at last he and Bessie got to be quite friendly. He had not made love to her, though, and that part had not pleased the girl; not that she cared two straws about York, but that she was so accustomed to have every new-comer offer incense at her shrine of beauty, that the young man's coldness fretted her.

He continued, "and I want to hire a good cook to come down and work for me."

"There's plenty of cooks—Chinamen," the girl replied, dishing up the ham and putting the eggs in its place.

"I don't want a 'John,'" he replied, "I want you; will you come? I'll give you a nice gold ring, and swear to take care of you all the rest of your life."

The girl's triumph had come at last. York was at her feet, but strange to say, she did not enjoy her triumph. York was altogether too much in earnest. He was not like the other suitors, who had plumped down on their knees, and talked of revolvers and bowie-knives, if they were refused; and when the refusal came, afterward, comforted themselves by getting "howling" drunk, and kicking up the devil's own row, in a free fight outside the Waterproof Saloon.

York was no such man, and Bessie, all at once woke to the knowledge that he was not a man to be trifled with by any woman.

She had courted the man's attentions, tried to make him care for her, simply because he had seemed indifferent to her charms, and now that he was in the toils, she discovered, too late, that it would have been better for her if she had left him alone.

The question came, and the answer must be yes or no. Which should it be? She discovered that she did not like him well enough to say "yes," and she was afraid to say "no."

York was reputed to be a merciless enemy, one who neither forgot nor forgave—an uncertain friend and a terrible foe.

One course only was open to her. Evade the question.

"Oh! do you want your eggs turned over?" she asked, attempting to ignore the heat of the fire began to affect it.

The ham sizzled and sputtered as the heat of the fire began to affect it.

Bessie stood by the table watching it. She was conscious that York's eyes were fixed intently on her face.

"Do you know, Bessie, that you are a very pretty girl?" York said, quietly.

"Do you think so?" And the girl busied herself over the fire, making quite a fuss over the pan that was getting along all right without her care.

"Yes, you're a regular first-chop of a girl, as a Chinaman would say, and I've come to the conclusion that I think a great deal of you."

"Do you like your ham well done?" the girl asked, suddenly, bending over the pan, and thus concealing her face from view.

"Well, yes, I think that I like it pretty well done," he answered, slowly and deliberately. He was making love with the same coolness with which he turned up a Jack from the bottom of his boot, or slipped a ten-spot into his boot, and took a "bowler" from his sleeve in its place.

"The fire is very hot," the girl said, slowly, finding that he did not speak, and stealing a sly glance at him from under her long lashes.

"Yes, I judged so by your face," York rejoined.

The girl's face grew scarlet, and she drove the fork into the ham, and turned it over as if the fate of nations depended upon her action.

"Bessie, I'm lonely down in my shanty,"

CHAPTER V.

A PREDICTION.

TALBOT looked at the girl in wonder.

Calmly she returned the gaze.

"You have come to test my power," she said, finding he did not speak.

Talbot had remained silent, evidently puzzled.

"Yes, partly that, and partly something else," he replied.

"I knew that you would come the moment that you heard that I was here," she said.

"You did?" There was a slight trace of astonishment in Talbot's voice.

"Yes; I was sure of it."

"I beg your pardon!" Talbot exclaimed,

sullenly; "but will you permit me to ask you why you were sure that I would come to see you when I learned that you were here?"

"Because you are a gambler, and like all who follow your evil trade, you are superstitious. You believe in luck; that it runs counter one hour, and in your favor the next. You have taken a dangerous task upon yourself, and you would learn from me whether you are to succeed or fail; whether you will take the desperate road-agent a helpless prisoner into Bannock, and there receive the thousand dollars blood-money offered for him, or whether you will fall by the bullet of the robber in some lonely canyon, with the vulture and the wolf as chief mourners by your side."

"My dear young lady, if you keep on in this strain, you'll speedily convince me that you are not a fortune-teller—that the gift of second sight has been denied you, and that, in reality, you are what an average American would call a first-class fraud," Talbot said, banteringly.

"Denial is easy," the girl replied, scornfully.

"So is assertion," he said, quickly; "but assertion is not proof. You tell me that I come to see you on a certain quest, and now I tell you that it is nothing of the sort; that you are utterly and thoroughly wrong."

"And you do not come for the purpose of learning whether you will succeed in winning your bet or not?"

"No."

"Why do you come?"

"If you can not tell that, your skill as a fortune-teller must be scant," he said, laughing.

"No," she replied, slowly, "that is beyond all earthly power, even though aided by the subtle influences of the spirit world. In the palm of your hand I can read the lines, which tell of your past life and predict the important events of the future. Gazing in the depths of my magic crystal, and aided by the mystic gift of looking into the future, which the seventh daughter gives to the seventh daughter, I can warn you of dangers to come, but can not tell you how to avoid them."

"Your information can not prove of much service, then," he said, dryly.

"Why not?" she demanded, quickly.

"Is the chart, which shows the location of the sunken reef beneath the wave, of no use to the mariner who holds the helm of the goodly ship? Will the knowledge of the quicksand not save the traveler from sinking into it? Why, then, will not the knowledge of the future be of use to you?"

"I will test your skill, at all events, since I am here," he said, gayly; "but, I assure you that I had another purpose in view when I came hither."

"And that purpose?" she asked, curiously.

"That is for you to find out," he replied, with a baffling smile. "I will own, though, that you do possess some mystic power, for you penetrated my disguise in an instant; but, as you confess that you expected me, that is not so wonderful."

"You wish to try my power?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Give me your hand."

Talbot extended the small, white hand, his chiefest pride.

A convulsive shudder shook the frame of the girl as she took the cold, white hand within her own warm palms.

Talbot noticed her agitation and wondered at it.

The eyes of the girl sparkled with a strange luster; her face was unnaturally white, and her bosom rose, and fell as the quick breath came from beneath the white teeth.

"First, I will speak of the past," she said, slowly.

A cloud gathered for a moment on the face of the gambler, and a sad look came into his clear, blue eyes.

"My past life has been miserable enough," he said, coldly; "only a little bit of sunshin here and there."

"And all that sunshine came from a woman's eyes," she said, slowly, looking not into the palm of the hand which she held within her own, but straight into his eyes.

Talbot did not reply.

Then the girl let her eyes rest upon the white palm. With her finger she traced a line toward the wrist.

"Two years ago, at Walla Walla, this hand was stained with blood," she said, slowly, and a strange unnatural gleam came into her eyes. "This little cross on the line of life tells of a bloody encounter which came near being fatal to you. Am I not right?"

"Yes," he answered, and again a puzzled look came upon his face. She noticed the look in an instant.

"You wonder at my knowledge," she said, quickly.

A quiet smile stole over Talbot's face.

"No, I do not," he replied; "however skillful you may be at reading hands, it is very evident to me that you are not good at reading faces. I do not wonder that you should know of my being concerned in an affray two years ago. All Walla Walla knew of it, and I think that you were there at that time. That is what puzzles me. I know that I have seen your face, and yet I can not place you."

"You are wrong!" the girl said, decidedly; "you have never seen the woman who calls herself Colomba Merleene before."

"I'd bet my last chip on it, though!" he cried, decidedly.

"I have spoken of the past; now for the future."

With her finger she retraced the line on the palm.

"I see here another cross on the line of life, and the time, six days ago."

Talbot shook his head.

"I have not been in danger within that time."

"You are wrong!" she exclaimed, quickly: "a hidden danger threatened you. Had you remained a day longer in Bannock, you would never have left it. A foe is tracking you down to your death. His arm was raised to strike, but by your abrupt departure you evaded the blow."

"Lucky thing, wasn't it?" Talbot said, coolly.

"But, you will not always be so fortunate," she exclaimed, quickly.

"Oh, the foe is still upon my track?" he queried.

"Yes; you have but gained a respite, not a pardon. Here, but a short space further on, is another cross which breaks your life of life, and that bodes a sudden and violent death."

"At the hands of the road-agents probably," Talbot said, in his cool, easy way.

"No; you will never die by their hands."

"By the hand of this unknown foe, then?"

"Yes."

"Another question—if your art can tell so much—how have I injured this person who seeks my life?" he asked.

"Can not your own heart answer that question?"

Talbot shook his head.

"Are you sure?"

"Quite sure."

"Perhaps your memory is bad," she said, quietly.

"Perhaps so, but I wouldn't advise you to bet on that, though, for you would most surely lose."

"Can you not remember some dead of blood—some life rudely snatched from the world by your merciless hand?" the girl demanded, sternly.

"No," Talbot replied, firmly; "no man ever fell by my hand except in a fair fight. Whatever my faults may be, no one can say with truth that I ever rushed hot-headed into a quarrel, or used a weapon until my own life was assailed. I don't think it is a sin for a man to protect himself."

"Blood demands blood!" the girl cried, quickly, springing to her feet as she spoke.

"By your own act you have placed the avenger upon your path. Remember my warning. Within ten days at most you will die a violent death. Good-night."

And before Talbot could utter a word, she entered the other apartment of the shanty and closed the door behind her.

Talbot—cool as he was—was considerably astonished.

"It's denced strange," he muttered; "this girl's face and voice are both very familiar to me, and yet I can not remember where or when I have met her. There is something odd about this affair. She's forgotten her fee, too. I suppose that is a pretty good proof that she is more spiritual than earthly. I'll leave a five-dollar gold-piece on the table for her. I think that that will be about the square thing. I doubt whether I get five dollars' worth of information out of her, though."

Then Talbot laid the gold-piece down upon the table and left the house.

As he walked carelessly down the road toward his shanty, whistling softly to himself, and in deep thought, he did not notice the three dark forms stealing along in the shadows cast by the shanties, and who were following closely behind him.

Deadly peril was nearer. "Injun" Dick, either he or the fortune-teller dreamed of.

Hardly had the door of the shanty closed behind Talbot when the girl came rapidly from the other room.

She advanced at once to the table and took up the gold-piece which Talbot had left. She held it up in her fingers, and the flickering light of the candle fell upon the shining surface of the metal.

A strange look was upon the face of the girl.

"And this comes from him," she muttered; "from the man who before many days have passed will have found peace and rest in the cold, quiet grave. He laughs at my warning and dashes blindly to his fate. Is it then his destiny to die as I have predicted? Twice already he has escaped. The first time, because other hands threatened his life, and it is fatal that he must die by one hand alone. And this is my fee!"

The lips of the girl curled, and she laughed low and mockingly; little touch of joy was there in that laugh.

Then she went to the wall and opened the shutter which served for a window.

Twenty feet from the shanty in its rear ran the river.

The moonbeams shining down upon the surface of the stream, decked it with countless lines of rippling light, while afar off the snow-white peaks gleamed cold and still bathing in the moonlight, and just below, the dark pines frowned down upon the rippling river like grim sentinels keeping watch and ward.

A moment the girl gazed at the wondrous-beautiful scene, looked at the cold, white peaks, gaunt pines and shining river; the incense of the trees filling the air with their strange odor, then she held the gold-piece up in the air, clasped between her thumb and finger.

A single instant the dark eyes gazed upon the gold as the white fingers held it; then, it went whirling through the air and sunk beneath the surface of the stream. Torn from the golden sands, it sought again its home.

"And as that metal sinks beneath the wave, so do I bury every spark of pity for this man. No act of mine shall save him from the death he has deserved!" she cried.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEATHER CORD.

TALBOT prudently down the street, retracing his steps to the Waterloo Saloon.

"Where have I met this girl?" he muttered, communing with himself as he walked along. "I am sure that she is no stranger to me; but for the life of me I can not remember when or where I have met her. The remembrance is more like a dream than reality. Her face is a peculiar one and once seen is not easily forgotten. She knows something of my past life too. It is not guess-work. She spoke of some hidden danger threatening me, but that may be only the usual cant of the fortune-telling trade." And Talbot's lip curled in contempt at the idea. Then a thought flashed through his mind and he came to a sudden halt.

"By Jove!" he cried, "I guess now what she was driving at. It is just about a year ago when that difficulty at Barrel Camp occurred. That young stranger gave me just a year of life, and then swore that he would hunt me down to my grave. But, from that time to this, I have neither seen nor heard of him, and had almost forgotten the entire affair. While I hunt the outlaw, Rocky Mountain Rob, I in turn may be hunted. That's the way of the world. I must keep my eyes about me; not that I really care particularly whether I live or die, as this world at present has very few charms for me, but I don't care that any one shall be able to boast that they got the better of me when I was 'heeled' and ready for the attack."

Talbot again strode onward with a firm step. As the thoughts of the threatened danger passed through his mind, involuntarily his hand had sought the handle of the revolver belted to his side, and concealed from view at the skirt of his coat.

Then suddenly, from around the corner of a small shanty, a man stepped forward into the moonlight as though meaning to dispute Talbot's passage.

In an instant the man dashed forward, and in a breath the moonlight flashed along the shining barrel of his leveled revolver.

"Hello, sport, don't shoot!" cried the stranger, holding up both his hands to show that he was weaponless.

The man was a stoutly-built fellow, dressed roughly in the usual miner fashion, big boots, into which the coarse pantaloons were tucked, reaching above the knees, a dirty red shirt and broad-brimmed felt hat pulled down over the eyes. A huge yellow beard covered the lower part of the man's face, and the shadow of the broad-brimmed hat hid the rest.

Talbot did not relax his guard in the least; the revolver, cocked and leveled still, threatened the stranger.

"Say, let up, old man," continued the fellow; "that thing may go off, first thing you know, and drill a hole right through this cuss."

Then the stranger took a step forward as if to advance, but halted suddenly; good cause he had, too, for staying his onward motion, for the revolver of Talbot had risen to the level of his breast, and in a second more the leaden ball would have plowed its way to his heart.

"Say, stranger, hold on your mule-team, darn your eyes! What the blazes do you want to draw a 'bead' on for a feller wot don't want to get up any fuss with you?"

"Just you keep your distance, my friend," Talbot replied, quietly. "I don't know what you want and I mean to find out before you get within arm's-length of me."

"I don't mean any 'harm,'" the stranger growled, sullenly.

"I don't say that you do," Talbot said, in his usual quiet way; "but I mean to understand what you do want before I let you get any closer to me."

"Why should you think that I mean any harm?" the stranger asked.

"Why do you jump out into my pathway from behind the shanty like a 'Jack-in-a-box?'" Talbot demanded.

"I didn't know that there was anybody 'round," the bearded fellow replied, in an injured way.

"You lie!" Talbot said, promptly.

"What?" roared the stranger, and he made a motion as if to draw a weapon.

"Steady, or I'll let daylight right through you!" Talbot cried, quickly. "This trigger works easy and my finger is a heavy one!"

"Say, you take an unfair shake," the stranger said, slowly, and in the tone of a deeply injured man. "I ain't 'heeled' for a fight. If I had a wepon I'd go for you lively now, you bet!"

"You're lying again," Talbot said, contemptuously. "I can see the butt of a pistol sticking out of your belt now. You are 'heeled' as well as I. I know that you mean mischief by the way you came out from behind that shanty. I've got the 'drop' on you now, and I don't intend to

give you any points in this game. Now you just turn your toes in the other direction or I'll put you in a condition to ride in the first coach of a first-class funeral to-morrow."

"Oh, you've got me, for sure," the threatened man said, sullenly, "and of course I've got to git."

Then a slight noise broke upon the stillness of the night.

Quick as thought, Talbot wheeled around; he guessed at once that danger threatened him from behind.

Too late the movement, for a lasso, thrown by a skillful hand, coiled down around his shoulders; the noose tightened, and Dick was hauled violently to the ground, his arms pinioned to his side as though held by iron bands.

A second more and three men sprang upon the fallen one, and quickly removed his weapons, then bound his arms securely behind him.

While the bearded stranger had held Talbot in conversation, the other two had come round the further corner of the shanty, and from the rear cast the lasso which had given Injun Dick a helpless prisoner into their hands.

Dick had not submitted without a desperate struggle, but the three, aided as they were by the iron grip of the lasso which pinioned Talbot's arms so securely, were too much for him.

One of the first acts of the assailants after overpowering Dick had been to force a wad of cloth into his mouth and tie it there, thus preventing him from calling for assistance, had he been disposed so to do.

There was but little chance, though, of any one hearing his cries, even had he been able to give an alarm, for they were in a remote part of the town, with only two or three shanties within earshot.

Night brawls, too, were common to Humpback Bar, and, as a general rule, people did not care to interfere in a quarrel not their own and run the risk of stopping a bullet intended for somebody else.

"I reckon that I've got the 'drop' on you, old hoss, after all," the yellow-bearded stranger said, in a tone of triumph, as he raised Dick to his feet.

"I'll go on ahead," said one of the men, who seemed to be the leader. "Bring him along between you, and if we meet any one, I'll fix the job."

Talbot gave a slight start of surprise when the voice of the stranger fell upon his ears. The voice was singularly familiar to him; he was sure that he had heard it before.

Then the four went on—the leader in the advance and the two others, with Talbot between them, following in the rear.

Talbot made no resistance, but went quietly on. The sudden attack, the pains taken to make him a prisoner and to avoid harming him in the struggle, were all a source of wonderment to him.

If his assailants had a grudge against him, why did they not settle it on the spot and take his life there and then? Why did they bear him away a prisoner? and whence were they bound?

All these thoughts passed quickly through Dick's mind as they proceeded swiftly onward.

The little party left the Humpback valley behind and plunged into a deep canyon, bending northward at a right-angle from the course of the Wisdom river.

Dark as midnight were the shades of the canyon, shut in as it was by the rocky walls and the tall pines which crowned their summits. But the disguised men went on without hesitation, as though the path was perfectly familiar.

It is evident that the men had a grudge against him, why did they not settle it on the spot and take his life there and then? Why did they bear him away a prisoner? and whence were they bound?

"Dan,"—her voice sounded very unnatural—"do you know the residence of Cyrus Winfield, Lucas Place?"

"Kinder."

"Will you deliver a note there for me?" writing rapidly while speaking.

"Yes."

When she had finished, she folded the paper, and addressed the envelope to Hugh Winfield.

"There it is—please deliver it some time in the morning, to-morrow, and I'll be very grateful. Now leave me to myself. I want to be alone."

But Dan lingered, to mention the plan he and Jiggers had entered into, for the discomfiture of the villainous physician.

He then showed Ilde the two wills which he had in his pocket.

After gaining a knowledge of Onorran's baseness, she read over the wills.

Then, before he divined her intention, she tore the forged instrument into a hundred pieces, and scattered them at her feet.

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"Good master Doe—
"You broke into my desk, did you? You robbed me, did you? Tell me where those papers are—quick! say your prayers before you die! I'm going to cure your curiosity and thievishness!"

"Oh, Lord!"

"Tell me where those papers are?"

"Indeed, indeed, I haven't got them!" wailed Jiggers, shivering and shaking, and watching in terror the upraised scalpel, which threatened each moment to descend.

"Then, where are they?—you rascal!"

"I don't know, I vow!—indeed I don't!"

"You do!" Onnorramm ground between his gritting teeth while he reddened more and more, and the savage look grew darker.

"Good master Doctor!—they must have been stolen!"

"And by you!" broke in the husky, hissing voice. "You stole them! You shall die for it!—you rascal! I'll have your life now!"

Jiggers screamed in affright, and pleaded loud for mercy.

"Say your prayers. You've only a moment—ha! ha! curses! Who's that?"

"Rap! rap! rap! came a sharp summons at the door.

But Onnorramm only grinned devilishly.

"Ha! h—a!" he laughed, with another grind of his teeth. "Let them knock at their knuckles break! The door is locked—and before they can get in you'll be dead, James Jiggers! You'll pry into my secrets, eh?—and rob me? Now then!"

Jiggers saw that his employer's anger had rendered him partially insane.

"H-e-l-p!" he shrieked, as the bright, razored steel ascended higher, and the physician seemed to be calculating his stroke.

Whiz! fell the scalpel.

Jimmy parried the blow—then, with a superhuman effort, released himself and darted across the room.

"Help! Help!" rang again from his lips.

Onnorramm muttered an oath, and leaped after him.

Just then the door cracked from its hinges, and the giant form of Dan Cassar strode in.

The Doctor wheeled savagely on him.

"Maledictions of death upon you!—who are you?" he snarled.

"I'm Dan Cassar, an' the champion o' Cal Mandor! Drop that ere knife, you—ha!" The infuriated man launched himself upon this intruder.

But Dan caught his knife-hand in a grip of iron—then sent him reeling across the apartment.

Jiggers made a dash for the book-shelf, and his fingers were already on the papers and treasure, which his employer had secreted there the night before, when Onnorramm aimed a blow at his heart.

Jiggers dropped the articles, and grappled.

No longer the servile drunkard, and strengthened by the presence of a powerful ally, he wound himself, snake-like, round his adversary, wrenched away the scapel—then the two went to the floor, rolling over and over.

"Jest 'let up, bobhead!' Dan jerked them apart, and held Onnorramm out at arm's length.

At that juncture, Hugh Winfield entered, and close behind him were Zella and Olse.

The cornered villain stared in astonishment on the two last comers, and his brain began to whirl.

It dawned upon him that these actors were there for a significant purpose.

He had been robbed of valuable papers—evidences of his dark plotting—he had found the body of the dead quadron; the mulatto girl had made known to him all that happened on the day previous; and these things flashed through his mind, in connection with what he now saw, to force upon him the realization that his misdeeds were known, that retribution hovered in the atmosphere fast closing around him.

"Look a-here!" growled Dan. "You see them 'ere two gals? One's the daughter o' Wilbur Kearn, an' t'other's the daughter o' Cal Mandor!"

Scarcely had he uttered the last name, when they were startled by a cry—a quick cry, and one full of a wild joy.

The door of the adjoining apartment flew open, and Calvert Mandor bounded in among them.

"Zella! Zella! My child!" but he paused. "What's his child?"

Great as was Dan Cassar's amazement at his unexpected appearance, he promptly pointed to Zella.

In a second she was folded to her father's breast.

Then the giant—still holding Onnorramm—explained Olse's identity in a few words.

Mandor took both in his arms, while tears of joy streamed from his eyes.

"Devil! Onnorramm!" he cried. "You thought me dead! Twice you have sought my life; but Heaven has been kind in preserving me for this moment of triumph. When you cast me down that treacherous pit, I did not fall, but clung to the edge as only a man can who clings for his life!

While you stood in the doorway, I drew myself in between the flooring; and, by diligence—spurred and strengthened by a hope to confront you, and visit the punishments of justice on you—I managed at last to reach the spring, and escape. The hour of your downfall has come!"

He was interrupted by a dire anathema from Onnorramm's lips.

The physician saw that all was lost. With one mighty effort, he broke the giant's hold on his shoulder, and dashed toward the rear apartment.

On the brink of the open hole, he paused to curse them and hurl defiance in their teeth.

Then, ere a hand could grasp him, he leaped downward.

Search was made for Theophilus Onnorramm; but he could not be found. He reached the Biddle street sewer, by means of the long hole he had mentioned to Jiggers; and he either died in there, or eventually escaped, to be seen no more by those whose varied fates we have followed.

The body of the quadron was buried by Dan Cassar's attention; and that worthy renounced his former life of evil associations, to remain with those who were now united in happiness.

Once Zella had found a father to love and care for them.

Though Zella soon rejoiced in a double love—for Hugh Winfield calls her "wife," and jealously guards the gem he was so near losing in the dark hours.

Olse is resigned, and her solace is the knowledge that she made a noble sacrifice and saved a sister's life. She never knew how near her past life came to being exposed to the world; for, when the detective

apprised Cyrus Winfield that Ilde Wyn was, beyond doubt, a party to the robbery, Olse's checkered history was known, and the officer was dismissed, with a heavy bribe to remain silent.

Cyrus Winfield did not sink under the pending crisis; why, the reader may easily divine.

Let us say for Jimmy Jiggers, that he has never tasted a drop of liquor since that night; and he and big Dan are inseparable companions.

THE END.

The Rock Rider: OR, THE SPIRIT OF THE SIERRA.

A TALE OF THE THREE PARKS.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE KNIGHT OF
THE RUBIES," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

ABSAKA.

At the moment when Belcour and Blanche Davis left the ledge on which they had been riding in full view, and dashed into an unknown canon to escape from their pursuers, a light, graceful figure made its appearance among the upper peaks of the Sierra, where usually only the absata roamed, and paused to overlook the strife in the valley below.

It was the same lonely and supernatural vision that the Indians worshiped as the Spirit of the Sierra.

She stood in the midst of those wild solitudes, beautiful and ethereal as ever, but we who are near her can see that she is, after all, undenieable flesh and blood, cast in a mold of uncommon beauty and vigor.

So might have looked the huntress Diana of distant ages, swift as the antelope, pure and white as the crescent moon that crowned her forehead, and so she looked, this bright, fairy-like being, who seemed to tread on air at times, so perilous was her path among the dark chasms.

She stood at the very brink of a precipice a thousand feet deep, at the entrance of the same tremendous gorge where Belcour had first seen her. For nearly a quarter of a mile it opened its way into the Sierra, a perfectly perpendicular chasm, with a black torrent, streaked with white foam, far below.

She leaped off into the empty air, still holding the cord. She swung downward over the dizzy void with the smooth, graceful motion of the pendulum, rose again far away, and alighted, like a bird, on a third tree, more than a hundred feet off. The mystery was explained. It was simply the application of the flying trapeze to the problem of crossing that void.

She turned round with a gay wave of the hand, standing alone on the perilous post in mid-air, and cast off the rope, with its weight.

Smoothly and evenly it swung back to the hands of Father Clement, who stood waiting to receive it; and the old man prepared to essay the bold task in his turn.

As he did so the girl grasped a second cord, which was stretched on still further, and again she descended, and rose again, in that graceful, easy-looking curve, which was yet so perilous, while the muscular form of her aged preceptor was swinging over the first gap.

The two seemed like swallows on the wing, so silent and gliding was the motion, and the second swing brought Absata to a pinnacle of rock overlooking the same black gulf into which she had disappeared when first seen by Belcour.

As she paused there, and sent the long cord swinging back to her companion, the sound of shots in the ravine beyond quickened her motions; and she swung across the dark chasm by a third cord, and stood on the same pinnacle of rock on which the conjuror had first seen her.

At that moment he burst in sight on his magnificent black horse, bearing the form of Blanche Davis in front of him, and coming at breakneck speed along the narrow ledge, toward the edge of the waterfall.

Absata shrunk back out of sight behind a rock, and saw him halt. He looked pale and desperate, for the clatter of horses' feet in the ravine above told of pursuers hard at hand, and escape seemed impossible. He had arrived at the very edge of the waterfall.

He dismounted there and hurriedly lifted the girl off. Absata blushed crimson, even in her concealment as she saw him, and heard him say:

"Stand still, young lady, behind the tree. His body and mine will shield you from the bullets. I can keep them off any time here."

Then she saw him run up the pass to a place where the ledge turned round a rock, and the young man deliberately sat down on the rocks and awaited the enemy.

He had not long to wait.

Yelling savagely, and whipping their mustangs, full of exultation at having cornered the fugitives, a long line of savages came galloping down the ledge in full view. No sooner did they come in sight than Belcour's rifle cracked, and the foremost mustang bounded into the air and fell over the precipice with his rider, stone dead.

But the rest were not daunted. They seemed to realize the nature of the desperate task before them, and came on as fast as ever.

Again the rifle cracked, and a second horseman fell, but the rest swept on, so fast that before Belcour could load again, they were close to him.

He leaped to his feet and pulled out his revolver instinctively.

For a few moments the confusion on that ridge was terrible. So narrow was the step of rock that only one could pass at a time, and the conjuror's pistol dealt death to three in as many seconds, each one falling over the precipice as he sunk under the shot.

Then there was a rattle of pistol bullets in return, and Belcour felt himself battered all over the breast on the secret cuirass that he wore, which had saved him from the bullets of Coeheise, when he astonished the garrison were out on a buffalo-hunt, and I was left in command, with only a dozen men. Well, sir, a band of Cheyennes, led by a wretch whom I saw Mrs. Beckford rescue from the jaws of death when he lay sick of the small-pox, burst in upon us, attacked the stockade, and put us to our utmost to defend ourselves. Mrs. Beckford and her little girl, only three years old, were caught outside the fort, and we saw the chief himself brain and scalp her, but the rest were not daunted. They seemed to realize the nature of the desperate task before them, and came on as fast as ever.

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Saturday Journal

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THE BEAUTIFUL FORGER; OR, The Adventures of a Young Girl.

A ROMANCE OF THE RANCHES.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT, AUTHOR OF "MAGDALENE'S MARRIAGE," ETC.

With its *local* in the romantic region of Southern California, the author has given to her story a singularly original and captivating character. The Beautiful Forger is something new in our fiction literature—a daring, subtle, not wholly unprincipled woman, whose alliance with a Mountain Brigand and her desperate schemes involving her own husband and her friends are painted in powerful lights. The Young Girl involved in the net of a strange fortune—the fierce half-breed lover—the Old Doctor—the young hero of the ranch—the two noble brothers—all are results. Then the woman is said to die “by the visitation of God,” though in nine cases out of ten it is only the simple and inevitable result of laws of nature pitilessly and persistently broken.

“Physically,” it is a mistake, because with marriage all mental growth is suspended in the large majority of women. Education, being regarded as simply a means toward an end, is abandoned as soon as the end is obtained. It may be argued that all education from such a motive is a mistake to begin with. True, but then it is one which keeps the culprit in the society of wisdom, and it is possible the mind under such influence might arrive at a juster conception of its worth and value.

“Physically,” it is a mistake, because at the early age at which many marriages are made, the human form has not arrived at perfected strength; and duties and responsibilities are laid upon it for which nature has made no adequate provision. Vitality is destroyed quicker than it is generated, and early and rapid decay of both mind and body are results. Then the woman is said to die “by the visitation of God,” though in nine cases out of ten it is only the simple and inevitable result of laws of nature pitilessly and persistently broken.

We are well aware that Henry Ward Beecher favors early marrying; but neither than nor any other parent anxious about their children’s welfare, can gainsay the force and truth of the above. Where early marriage is consummated it must be regarded as the lesser of two evils, not the greater of two blessings. A man at twenty-five, and a woman at twenty-two are only just performed, showing what they are to be in the future; and to wed before those ages is simply an experiment in all cases, and in some cases is a serious and irremediable mistake.

It may be better for a boy who is wild and forming bad habits to “settle down” in marriage, but, what a risk does the girl incur who marries such a person! This marrying to reform is a singular mode of redressing a wrong, considering that one of the parties to the transaction, who is pure and good, is to be made to assume, for her share, a very questionable good.

No; the arguments used for early marriage—that is marriage before full manhood and full womanhood—are all exceptional and equivocal; and when a right tone is given to public sentiment, on the proper relations of the sexes, no sympathy will be felt for the crime of boy and girl marriage.

TRUE WOMANHOOD.

“THERE are three things a woman can do not. She can not throw a stone at a hen, carry an umbrella, or sharpen a lead-pencil.”

Some editor, being at a loss for some sensible matter with which to fill his newspaper, had the brightness to have that printed. Really, girls, we ought to get him a gold medal, and have his life insured, for one with such a brain can not live long; he is too bright to dwell with us common mortals, and heaven is being deprived of an angel every moment he tarries with the inhabitants of this earth.

Supposing a woman can not do these heroic tasks—which I don’t for a moment acknowledge—is it for the safety of the country, or the welfare of humanity that these accomplishments are denied her? Has she no nobler purpose for which to live, or no greater end to obtain? We women, having so many more and better affairs to attend to, can’t spend our time upon frivolous pursuits—throwing stones at hens, carrying umbrellas, and sharpening lead-pencils, are your prerogatives, gentlemen, for which you seem to be especially gifted.

It may be that we girls don’t make ourselves as useful as we ought, for if we did, perhaps we shouldn’t see so many hits and flings in the papers as to our uselessness! But this we know—men work more like machinery, with a great deal of noise, while we are quiet workers, and rarely clamor about what we have done.

If a man throws a stone at a hen, he raises such a hullabaloo about it, that the whole neighborhood knows about it. If a woman throws the stone, it would be done so quietly that the hen would smile and say, “Thank you,” as she fluttered away. But she would drive the hen away just as effectually as the man.

Of course we don’t care what the masculine fraternity say against us; yet, wouldn’t it be as well to appear to our best advantage even to them? If some of us have an idea that to talk of the fashions, the latest novel, or the most recent concert, is enough to make us interesting in conversation before the “Lords of the Creation,” it is a very erroneous idea; all sensible men had rather hear us talk sense, and if we don’t do it, they think we can’t.

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EVE LAWLESS.

sarsaparilla and mandrake; we create orders of shoddy aristocracy out of plasters; and can proudly point to our bilious complexions, our coughs, our rheumatisms and our fevers as evidence of our capacity to “take” any compound of drugs that any college, quack or practitioner can devise.

IVY HILLFIELD

Early Marriages.—We are frequently solicited by correspondents to give our views regarding the propriety of early marriage—marriage before a “competence” is secured—marriage with cousins, etc., etc. To most of these we prefer not to answer, for giving advice on personal matters is a very delicate and hazardous business. As to early marriages in general we have views which the Science of Health so well expresses, that we beg leave to repeat them:

Morally, mentally, physically, premature marriage is a mistake among women; and yet every day we can see this mistake sanctioned by the offices of religion, blessed by the consent of friends, and entered into with all the *eccl* which should be reserved for a triumph rather than a trial.

Morally, it is a mistake, because few women are fit, at an age when they should be “under authority,” to rule a household prudently; since no atmosphere is so dangerous for an undeveloped soul as that of the almost absolute power which is generally delegated to the young wife. She may now do whatever is pleasing in her own eyes. She has been freed from parental restraint, and any other enlarged according to the will and moral sense of her who draws it. Angels might fear to walk in such a broad freedom as is given by love and suffrage to the majority of our young married women—women by courtesy, children in the regard of both law and wisdom.

Mentally, it is a mistake, because with marriage all mental growth is suspended in the large majority of women. Education, being regarded as simply a means toward an end, is abandoned as soon as the end is obtained. It may be argued that all education from such a motive is a mistake to begin with. True, but then it is one which keeps the culprit in the society of wisdom, and it is possible the mind under such influence might arrive at a juster conception of its worth and value.

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EVE LAWLESS.

Chat.—Carl B., of this city, writes: “Although I have tried a good many of the most popular weeklies, there is none that can attract or command my interest so thoroughly as my own SATURDAY JOURNAL, &c. which I would not take all the other weekly papers put together, even if they had their columns crammed twice as full; in fact, the JOURNAL has become a necessity to me, and I would no more do without it than without my dinner when hungry.” Can evidently is a good reader. Quality not quantity is a safe principle of natural selection.”

Dio Lewis complains that papers copy his matter and give no credit. That is the experience of all good journalists. Those editors who can not originate will gain a factitious reputation by appropriating others’ brain-work; but that system of conducting a popular or a local weekly, will not be a success. We see much of the matter of this journal “going the rounds” without a sign of credit. Some of these days it may be necessary to speak more plainly, for the disreputable may become more than an annoyance to us.

The city, just at present, is literally swarming with men out of employ—elephants, bookkeepers, agents, etc. Give us something to do! Is this the cry of an army of persons (chiefly young men,) who having been fitted for “business life” can not enter the trades. We are pained almost daily at the instances we hear of, where very deserving and competent men are actually suffering. Work for willing hands is all they want, not charity; but there is no work for them; the supply far exceeds the demand in all the commercial and professional avenues of life. Only when the busy season sets in can a portion of this surplus find employ, at small salaries and precarious tenures of place. When will this dreadful drift of young men from the country to the city cease? We suppose never.

—Fifteen thousand medical practitioners and thirty medical institutions at work turning out new recruits daily for this grand army of physicians, surgeons, doctors, experts, practitioners and medical experimenters; that is what we Americans have to endure. Just think of the drugs this host dispenses! Just think of the diseases they “practice” upon and don’t care, and the amount of money they extract yearly for “services!” That seven-tenths of all this “practice” is pure humbug, every honest physician will confess, and the only wonder is that we who take their doses do not tire of the whole business. But we don’t tire; on the contrary we yearly swallow more medicine than any other people on the earth, and seem rather proud of the fact. We build marble palaces out of pills; we buy magnificent estates with decorations of buchu,

What New York Ladies are Wearing.—*Adieu à Crinoline*.—Drawn Through a Key-hole.—*Dolmens*.—*Watered-Ribbon Sashes*.—*Short Skirts once more Fashionable*.—*Furs, Coiffures, Ornaments*.—*Imported Costumes*, etc.

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THE HOME IN THE DELL.

BY A. P. M., JR.

Deep in the dell,
Bedded in roses,
Peeping from under a curtain of bloom;
Pride of the dell,
Pleasure of roses,
One little cottage—a rare jewel's home.
Cottage of pleasure,
Castle of bliss,
Holding a treasure
Such as a king,
Seeming a flower containing a gem;
Like the cap of the rose with its dew diadem.

Breezes of sweet,
Tangled in the beams,
Birds that sing music of love;
Airs of content,
Guiling till one dreams
Of the perfumes in Rosetta's fair grove,
Bosom of joy,
Gilded and green,
Free from alloy—
All a charmed picture of heavenly mold,
Like to those the soft visions of slumber unfold.

Who would not live
In an Eden like this,
And rather in rudeness of cities to dwell?
Who would not give—
Thus of his bliss!—
All he possessed for a home in the dell?—
When two fond eyes,
Beaming with love,
Lie the deep skies
That mantle above:
Where ripe lips bid you a welcome and stay,
Like the glad flower welcomes the new life of day!

Uncle Phil.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"So you don't like her, Uncle Phil? I must confess I am very, very sorry."

"Can't help that, Roy. You asked me the simple question, if I liked Miss Cora Winchester, and I answered, as simply, that I do not like her."

Uncle Phil Myrtleton slowly uncrossed his feet, and then recrossed them on the rail of the piazza, and Roy—handsome, sancy Roy, his uncle's especial admiration—sat staring out on the warm-tinted trees that wound, in scarlet and yellow glory, around the foot of the hill.

"I wish I did, though, I declare I do, for your sake," he went on, in a kind, thoughtful way. "I know she's very pretty and accomplished, and all that sort of thing, but for my part, I wouldn't give up Angie Sefton's curls for Miss Winchester's—er—er set."

Uncle Phil evidently completed his remark a little differently from the way he originally intended, for a little quizzical smile lurked under his heavy gray mustache.

Roy's lips suddenly curled.

"Angie Sefton! Is it possible, Uncle Phil, you imagined I was at all interested in her?"

But there came a deepening of the bronze flush on Roy Myrtleton's handsome face, and as he found Uncle Phil in no ways inclined to take his keen blue eyes off his countenance, Roy looked away—over the tinted hill again.

For a moment Uncle Phil only watched his nephew's face; then, very gravely, he answered:

"Most assuredly I did think you were deeply interested in Angie—bless her sweet face! If you have not been in earnest, Roy, what have you been meaning by all the rides, and drives, and sails this summer, until Miss Winchester came, a fortnight ago? I tell you seriously, my boy, I am afraid Angie has been in earnest, if you haven't."

Roy threw away his cigar in one of his sudden bursts of impatience.

"And am I to blame if she misconstrued a flirtation for real love-making? I tell you, Uncle Phil, I want a far different style of wife than Angie Sefton would make."

"One like Miss Cora Winchester, for instance?" returned the elderly gentleman, dryly.

"Well—yes, since you seem determined I shall commit myself, although I am not in the least ashamed to own I am in love with Cora Winchester."

Roy pushed back the rustic chair in which he was sitting, with a gesture more impatient than graceful, and Uncle Phil, as he watched the fine figure and noble head of the "boy" he loved so well, as Roy walked off toward Miss Winchester's boarding-house, gave a half-sigh of sympathy for pretty Angie Sefton.

"Pretty" Angie? Indeed, she was just one of the sweetest, prettiest girls for miles around, and now, contrary to ordinary rules of beauty, she was doubly charming, with her cheeks all tear-flushed, and her little scarlet mouth quivering. She had been dreaming such sweet dreams all the summer, and although when stylish Miss Winchester came to wind up her summer campaign at Mrs. Foxglove's boarding-house, and Roy Myrtleton and she struck up such a sudden, devoted friendship, Angie had vaguely wondered if a certain sort of awakening would not almost kill her, still never had the blow come until now—this very breezy October afternoon.

All of a sudden it had come, with a truthfulness from which there was no denial, with a cruelty from which there was no release; for, with her very own ears, that so loved the music of Roy Myrtleton's voice, she had heard what he said regarding her, to Uncle Phil.

There hadn't been much romance about it, either; but then, hard facts seldom are romantic. She had only been resting herself that afternoon, after baking some Charlotte de Russe for Roy's particular delectation, and through her open window that was just above the piazza where they sat, she had heard it all.

Something very like a death-pallor gathered around her mouth, at first, and she sat like one dazed. Then the tears rushed away from her heart, where it seemed they were curdling, and, woman-like, she cried over her shattered idol—her love for Roy Myrtleton.

And then, an hour or so after, she bathed her eyes till their tear-traces had gone, donned fresh cuffs, collar and flared white apron—and went down to the dining-room, to show Roy Myrtleton that she, too, preferred something in "a little different style" from himself.

"And Uncle Phil has the bad taste not to like her," thought Roy, as he looked very earnestly at the bright vision beaming upon him from the sofa in Mrs. Foxglove's parlour.

She had taken great pains with her toilet that day—Miss Cora Winchester, we mean—because she felt quite assured that Roy

Myrtleton would come. And he had come, fresh from the encounter with his uncle, who persisted in not liking this lovely girl, with her wavy hair that she arranged so gracefully and naturally, with her innocent, modest blue eyes that she turned on him so bewitchingly. Not like Cora Winchester! not admire that white-robed girl, all smiles and dimples! It was past Roy's comprehension, and he actually fell into a reverie on the subject, despite Miss Cora's presence.

"Oh, Mr. Myrtleton, I do believe you are thinking about that young girl I saw at your house the day I drove past. You are not a bit entertaining!"

She pouted and smiled at him in a way that quite bewildered him.

"Am I not entertaining? I assure you I was thinking of a young lady, but not my uncle's ward, by any means."

"No?" she returned, sweetly, and with the faintest blush possible.

"No," repeated Roy: "I was wondering whether Miss Cora Winchester cared as much for me as I do for her."

There, Roy had said it, and while saying he had walked across the room, and now stood before her, awaiting her answer.

"Oh, Mr. Myrtleton, this is so unexpected, so—"

"Never mind! Answer me, Cora, won't you? No, I will come this evening again, and give you time to consider it. But, Cora, remember what 'no' will be to me."

He stooped and just touched her forehead with his lips, and was gone from her presence before she was well aware of it. And then a curious smile gathered on her lips, as she slowly went to her room, took out her writing materials, and wrote a letter.

"Rex, will you mail this for me, please? I believe I can not reach the box."

It was Cora Winchester's voice that Roy Myrtleton heard, although he could not see her for the crowd in the post-office. "Rex" he saw; a tall, stylish fellow—a stranger to him, but who evidently was very far from being a stranger to Cora.

Somehow, it grated unpleasantly on him when he heard the voice of this girl he loved calling this gentleman so familiarly; to be sure, it might have been a brother, or cousin, only that Cora had once mentioned the fact of her being brotherless, and almost countless—certainly there was no "Rex" among the few.

So Roy, naturally enough, while he and they two, and a dozen or so more, waited for the opening of the mail—I say Roy did just what you or I would have done—that is, took quite accurate notes of this Mr. "Rex," and then, because he discovered that "Rex" was remarkably handsome, forthwith felt exceedingly jealous, and began to wonder if Cora's answer would be "yes" when he went to her, an hour later.

Of a sudden, Cora's voice uttered a sentence that astounded him, and then—I don't think he was at all to blame for it—he listened to catch every sound.

"He's to come at seven for his answer, Rex. Isn't progressing finely?"

"Beyond your most sanguine hopes, it seems. But I must confess, Cora, to me the game is hardly worth the candle."

"Opinions differ," she laughingly returned. "When I think how Miss Sefton scorned you, I can do anything to mortify him! Well, at any rate, I've won him away from her, and if—"

And just then there was a sudden rush for the window, and Roy quietly took his mail, and departed.

So he was the "game," was he, of pretty Miss Cora and handsome "Rex"? And this Rex—no, never he recollects a certain suitor of Angie Sefton's who had annoyed her with his attentions, and of whom he—Roy—had been so fiercely jealous, until he found Angie barely tolerated him.

He gave a long breath of relief to think how he had escaped the mortification of a refusal from Miss Winchester; and, his wounded feelings overbalanced by his self-gratulation, he caught himself berating himself that he had neglected little Angie so long. Pretty little Angie—ah, what delightful times they used to have before—and Roy hesitated to even think Cora Winchester's name.

Well, he'll make it up with Angie; she was an affectionate little thing, and there would be no difficulty in making friends. Thank Heaven!—he was free of Miss W.

And so, by reason of that impulsive disposition of his that rebounded so easily, Roy Myrtleton went almost gayly home, building very pleasant castles, inhabited by himself and Angie Sefton.

Only, thought Roy, "I do wonder what Uncle Phil will say?"

And this is what Uncle Phil said, when he met Roy on the veranda.

"You're as welcome as the birds in May, my boy, for I was just wanting somebody to congratulate me, Angie! here, you surely are not going to desert me so soon?"

And Roy vaguely wondered at the blushes on her cheeks he bode.

"Show it to him, Angie—see, Roy, our engagement-ring! Oughtn't I be a happy dog? Don't you wish me joy—both of us?"

Dear old Uncle Phil! his splendid face all alight with the love that would lighten Angie Sefton's life as long as he lived.

Poor, poor Roy!

He stole a glance at Angie's sweet, blushing face, that bore no concern specially for him, and then, after well-wishes he was obliged to utter, went up to his room, so lonely and dejected, wondering if, after all, there were such things as happiness and love.

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right sort of a rig, and now I suppose I can just trot it back again without giving the thoroughbreds a warming up."

"That would be too great a pity. I would send you in to solicit mamma's company, but she was too late at breakfast and would keep you waiting an hour, I know. I hope you'll find some one, Mr. Arnold."

"Oh, no trouble about that," grumbled the disappointed swain, as he watched the fair lady of his choice helped in the other outer. "Plenty of them, but not a Florry Redesdale in the lot. Bundles of nerves ready to screech at a two-inch jump—so-decided sweet on a fellow, too. *That's* a girl for you, now, don't go to toying for the sake of your sawdust. Hang it all; why couldn't Lessingham stick to his biz—haven't heard of him being out banking-hours for a month. I wonder now if she's apt to be struck by that red mane of his. He's a jolly good core—I'll say that—but blessed if I like him to cut ahead of me!"

Sublimely unconscious of this muttered reflection, Aubrey tucked the tiger-skins about his companion, and away they swept over the as yet scarcely-broken surface of the square. At the first crossing they encountered Walter Lynne and Colonel Marquestone, arm-in-arm upon the sidewalk. Both gentlemen bowed, and Florry fancied that there was a shade of displeasure on her fiancee's face.

"Jealous, I verily believe," she thought. "I wonder—"

It was not the first time Florry had wondered since New Year's Eve, but as now she had invariably crushed her misgivings without analyzing them. She was conscious of a vague feeling of disappointment, but whether it applied most probably to him or to herself, she was not prepared to assert.

"I suppose the sensation of delicious consciousness at loving and being loved, wears off with the novelty of the thing," she had thought. "People are apt to grow uncommonly tiresome, I've observed, when they're once engaged. I didn't know before that the attribute applied individually to the happy actors in the play. I thought it was rather an affection observed by outsiders than acknowledged by those whom it might concern. Heigho!"

A dreary yawn had finished that reflection, and some other subject presenting itself to her mind, Florry brightened visibly in her mood.

Now Aubrey touched his whip to the flank of the leader, looking a shade graver than this wont.

"I don't like that Colonel Marquestone," said he, with a backward glance. "He has been among us for years, and he is still a mystery. I'm afraid that he's exerting some influence that's not for the best over Lynne."

Florry gave her shoulders a little contemptuous shrug.

"A man ought to be able to look out for himself, I should think."

"Which declares that you are a novice in the ways that are dark, Miss Redesdale. You don't know anything about the pitfalls which yawn under our unwary feet. Heaven forbid that I should prejudice you against my sex, but you mustn't trust us all too implicitly. A man may look like Apollo, and dance like an angel—provided angels do dance—and his heart be deceitful and desperately wicked, still."

"I'm to understand I can safely confide in only the old and ugly of your kind, I suppose. You're trying to warn me against that delightful Mr. Arnold, now, I know, but I'm going to shut my eyes to the truth of your aphorism. I couldn't think of imprinting deceitful and desperately wicked sentiments to him."

"Nor need you," was Aubrey's laughing rejoinder. The young Californian was the last person to be included in the type he had given. "I'm happy to assure you, too, that Apollos and angels were never known to sport red hair and freckles."

He shook his tasseled locks in mock defiance at her arch glance. He was rather proud of his hair, despite his depreciation of it, and it was certainly rare as it was—beautiful! I nearly wrote, but then people differ on that point. It was of the auburn tint which changes in different lights from rich chestnut to red flame-color; he wore it in a bizarre fashion, rather long and rolling in clustering curls from the forehead to the nape of his neck. A very different type of manly appearance from Walter Lynne, with his blonde locks cut close, his blue eyes, effeminate cast of feature, and complexion transparent as a dainty belle's. Aubrey was tall, broad-shouldered and sinewy, with a man's determination of character stamped on his rather boyish face, and reflected from his brown eyes.

"I'm to infer that your celestial acquaintances are extensive," suggested Florry, saucily. "How else am I to reconcile your intimate knowledge of the angels?"

"Who lives nowadays without knowing hosts of them? You remember the saying—Speak of an angel and you hear the rush of his wings." I believe in the rule of transposition, by which it might become—Feel the presence of an angel and you are led to speak of them? There, Miss Redesdale, that is the last nonsensical speech I mean to make you to-day. I give you credit for possessing a soul above trifles, and a taste above trashy sentimentalities."

Notwithstanding, Florry ran lightly up the steps on their return, and waited for her ring to be answered with the conviction that she had passed a very pleasant morning. A breath of chilly moisture swept her cheek as she waited there.

"Raining," she exclaimed, with an upward glance to the leaden sky. "No more sleighing for a time, then."

Raining it was, and the soft, steady downpour swept away every trace of the snow in the city streets before nightfall. Florry stood by her window, looking ruefully out at the muddy patches which still lingered in sheltered places, when a tap at her door was followed by the entrance of her stepmother in dinner costume.

A heavy lusterless black silk this time whose rustling folds would have stood alone. She wore a slender chain of gold, and a bracelet clasped upon the arm which was firm and white and polished ivory. Whatever she wore was becoming to her, yet her toilettes had an appearance of severe simplicity which the richness of their details scarcely admitted—it must have been that she was one of those women who are born for gorgeous combinations—heir style was so striking that it required a striking mode of dress to tone it down. She had a sprig of scarlet geranium in her hair—the only touch of color she had ventured upon yet was in her floral decorations. Mrs. Redesdale had her own ends to meet, by seeming inconsolable in her widowhood, and appeared with Spartan fortitude, always in

the solid blacks which she heartily detested.

"Dreary," said she, with a little shiver, and a glance through the panes. "Come away, Florien. It will light up beautifully. The Mechlin laces and pearls with it by all means."

Mechlin laces and pearls it was, and very fair Florien looked in them as she stood under the drawing-room gasoliers, the pale blue silk "lighting" with a ravishing effect.

Walter, who was the first to come, met her with a new thrill of pride in his conscious possession.

"My star of the evening, you bewitch me anew with every new phase. In white you're angelic, in blue seraphic, in seal-skin and somebody else's cutter—"

"Cutting," said Florry. "Reserve your comparisons, Walter. Do you know, sir, there is a crowd to pluck between us before we smoothly sail again? My temper and patience are sorely discomposed."

"What is it, my angel?"

"Don't 'angel' me, sir; I'm in any thing but an angelic humor, I assure you. Didn't I especially remark no longer ago than yesterday, that I did not wish you to label me Engaged—and here you are petitioning mamma to exert her authority over me to do that very thing. When I'm ready to submit to any authority, I'll very decorously go to the altar and give you the right to command, but you mustn't expect to tyrannize over me beforehand."

"My darling, what a mistake! I tyrannize! I beg the exertion of her authority!"

"You know you did. And I'll not have it—do you hear? I'll not have it. I'm a grown young lady, with a will and a judgment of my own, not a wild little girl scampering over Jersey sands, climbing Jersey cliffs, and ready to be twisted about the finger of a Jersey summer stroller."

"What an outbreak! Florry dear, what have I done to deserve it?"

"What have you done? The very thing I forbade you doing. If I have to repeat it, you went to mamma—"

"Yes, you told me that, but it is one part of the delusion you labor under. I did not go to mamma—she came to me. It's true as I tell you, she badgered it out of me. I hadn't any idea, but that you'd told her the whole affair—didn't know differently until now, upon my word. I did ask her to intercede for me in making it known, as much out of compliment as any thing else. It's rather hard to be lectured for being impatient to realize my bliss, I think."

"And I suppose if any of our dear friends of society, Miss Day or Miss Lessingham, for instance, or say Mr. Arnold and the club men, saw fit to interest themselves in our affairs, they would badger it out of you too. You would have to make some concessions to them by way of compliment, I dare say."

"My dear Florien, I wouldn't have vexed you for the world."

"Vexed, Mr. Lynne? Angels and seraphs and the like never get vexed."

"Mr. Lynne—Miss Redesdale," reproachfully. "Angels and seraphs do not, but darling impulsive little girls do with reason or without it. I beg your pardon most sincerely, Florry—will that do? I don't want you to make our engagement known; I'll just go and flirt with Miss Day and Miss Lessingham, and leave you to waltz with the Californian prince to your heart's content."

"You couldn't do better, my dear Walter."

"Ah, you can laugh, knowing that a nod from you will bring me to the relief. As if I could exist estranged from you, darling!"

And so the little cloud was swept from the lovers' sky, leaving all as serene as before. But straws show which way the wind blows, and unanimity of opinion was not to be a bond between the two. Walter, inclined to be jealous as he was, went over to devote himself to Mrs. Redesdale when Mr. Arnold dropped in during the evening.

"I will settle that with Walter, mamma."

"I haven't a doubt of it," mentally commented mamma. There was never any thing like gushing affection brought to bear between these two women whom fate had thrown together. From the moment the elder lady first encountered Florien's clear eyes, she knew that flimsy pretences would be quite too transparent for a blind. So she was content to sink even the patronizing authority, which would have been so be coming to her style, and leave the young lady apparently handling the reins of freedom in the most approved manner.

"One can whistle down the wind if one whistles long enough," had said Mrs. Redesdale's summing of conclusions. "And willful girl's whims will wear themselves out if you give them time and space enough. To keep up a rebellion it is necessary to have opposition, and a little skillful agreeing is better than a whole stone wall to quash that."

"Don't let me keep you longer," she said, and with her own hand rung for the maid.

"You're not quite rid of me yet, you see. So young and so fair, you aren't obliged to resort to the artifices of the toilette which women care to hide, so you'll not be offended if I preside. What are you going to wear, Florien?"

"I don't know. Just brush out my hair, Adele, and let it go at that. Something blue, I think. That's my color, you know."

"How unconcerned you are. Most girls of eighteen think of nothing but their dresses, but that's the advantage of not having to rely upon your make-up. You're sure to look charming in any thing."

"Any thing suits me, I think."

A fresh dash of rain against the window-panes caused Mrs. Redesdale to glance that way with a little shiver.

"Horrid weather! who would have thought it yesterday?"

"Who, indeed!" Florry thought, with a twinge of regret of the merry sleigh-rides she had been planning for the evening.

"I've had the best of them, though," she said, to herself, and then gave her tongue a sharp nip between her teeth as she remembered it had not been taken with Walter. Very loyal Florry was trying to prove herself in thought, and very remiss she found herself at times.

"And I promised to take a run down country to-morrow," Mrs. Redesdale resumed. "I do hope this down-pour will cease. I've heard of a small property upon the coast which is to be disposed of at forced sale, and it may prove a chance to get a quiet summer retreat very cheap. One thing, I will certainly see its worst points under such adverse circumstances."

"Surely you'll not go if the storm lasts?"

"My dear, I'm one of those preposterous

ly healthy females that no sort of weather hurts. What a lovely shade that silk is, Florien. It will light up beautifully. The Mechlin laces and pearls with it by all means."

Mechlin laces and pearls it was, and very fair Florien looked in them as she stood under the drawing-room gasoliers, the pale blue silk "lighting" with a ravishing effect.

Walter, who was the first to come, met her with a new thrill of pride in his conscious possession.

"My star of the evening, you bewitch me anew with every new phase. In white you're angelic, in blue seraphic, in seal-skin and somebody else's cutter—"

"Cutting," said Florry. "Reserve your comparisons, Walter. Do you know, sir, there is a crowd to pluck between us before we smoothly sail again? My temper and patience are sorely discomposed."

"What is it, my angel?"

"Don't 'angel' me, sir; I'm in any thing but an angelic humor, I assure you. Didn't I especially remark no longer ago than yesterday, that I did not wish you to label me Engaged—and here you are petitioning mamma to exert her authority over me to do that very thing. When I'm ready to submit to any authority, I'll very decorously go to the altar and give you the right to command, but you mustn't expect to tyrannize over me beforehand."

"My darling, what a mistake! I tyrannize! I beg the exertion of her authority!"

"You know you did. And I'll not have it—do you hear? I'll not have it. I'm a grown young lady, with a will and a judgment of my own, not a wild little girl scampering over Jersey sands, climbing Jersey cliffs, and ready to be twisted about the finger of a Jersey summer stroller."

To-day the flowers bid and bloom. The sun shines bright and clear. The seagulls, screaming, sweep the sea, And bird-songs greet my ear. The wild waves come, and break, and go. The white ships sail away. But the hope that blessed me yesterday, Is dead forever to-day.

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY.

BY LETTIE A. IRONS.

I had a sweet hope yesterday,
And the white-winged ships, like seagulls, sailed
Away across the sea.
The bright sun shone—the sweet birds sung
Amid the leafy boughs.
And everywhere the seaphys strained
To drink the flowers' morning bloom.

To-day the flowers bid and bloom.
The sun shines bright and clear.
The seagulls, screaming, sweep the sea,
And bird-songs greet my ear.
The wild waves come, and break, and go.
The white ships sail away.
But the hope that blessed me yesterday,
Is dead forever to-day.

When the colonel entered the room and attempted to take me in his arms, I shot him, just as if he had been a wild beast. Then I fled into the open air. I turned from the narrow street into a broad one. The bells suddenly commenced to ring and the people came rushing through the street, exclaiming that the Yankee troops had entered the city. And so they had. Richmond had fallen! I never shall forget that night; the negroes seemed mad with joy.

"I made my way as soon as I could to New York, but I could not discover any traces of my father there. And one day as I was walking through the streets, I came face to face with the secretary who had sold me to Melledge. He told me that Melledge was in the city and had been in search of me. I implored him not to betray me. He consented on one condition, and that was that I should go with him. I consented, for I knew that the only way to escape from him was to deceive him. I gave him a false address and promised to wait for him at my house. The moment he left me, I walked on I know not where, until I found myself at a railroad depot. A train was just starting for Boston. I got on board and came to that city. I procured an obscure lodging, and gave a false name, and strove to hide myself from all the world. I got sewing to do, and so I lived a weary, aimless life, until this last winter I fell sick; it was a sort of slow fever, and one day as I sat in my little room vainly trying to sew, the door opened and the secretary walked into the room. In a cold, cruel voice he told me that now he had found me, I must choose between him and my husband, who, he said, was in the city searching for me. Again I deceived him, and he, thinking that I was too sick to attempt to escape, left me for the purpose of calling a coach to take me away. But weak as I was, I staggered into the street. It was just getting dark, and snowing furiously. I did not go far; I had only one wish, to die; and so in a dark corner, I lay down in that snow bank, hoping to find the rest that had denied me."

"But you were saved?"

"Yes—yes—as I have never loved any one else, as I shall never love again. I have struggled vainly against it, but it is more powerful than I, and I will not resist my fate. In spite of the guilt which will cling to the action, in spite of every thing in this world, whether we live or die, I am yours until eternity." Her arms were clasped around his neck, her head resting on his shoulder.

Little recked either that they had been drenched by the sea-waves almost to the skin, and that the wet clothing was clinging around them.

"You have something to tell me, have you not?" he asked.

"Yes; before I have always feared that you would despise and hate me when you knew of my past life; but now your kisses have told me that, no matter what I have done, your love will not falter."

"No, believe that!" he cried, fervently.

"Mr. Sinclair?"

Then for the first time he took his eyes from the girl he held within his arms and looked around him. The night was coming on rapidly; already the gloom was descending upon the waters. Wood Island light, shining brightly some two miles to the south-west, showed how far they had drifted with the tide.

"I must see if I can rig a sail in some way, and then we can beat back into the harbor," he said.

He instructed Lydia how to manage the tiller, while he proceeded to clear away the wreck. Within half an hour he had, by aid of an oar, rigged a sail, and once more the Pearl was gliding over the water, beating up outside of Stratton's Islands.

"It will be dark long before we reach the shore, at this rate," he said, resuming his seat at her side. "The good folks of the twin cities would have plenty to talk about, but the prompt announcement of our engagement will be pretty apt to stop their mouths."

"Now, must I tell you all?" she asked, nestling down by his side.

"Yes, all!"

"Give me your hand then; I shall feel more confident feeling the pressure of your touch."

He passed his arm around her waist and drew her up close to him.

"Go on; you are comfortable now?"

"Yes." Then she began her story. "I am a Virginian, born in the town of Staunton, up in the mountains. My father was quite wealthy, and I was an only child. When the war broke out I was twelve years old. My father was called to Richmond and became one of the chief officers of the Government. When I was about fifteen years old, father introduced me into society, and I saw a great deal of company; mostly all were officers of the army stationed in Richmond or with Lee's army on the Potowmack. One officer in particular, a colonel of a Georgia regiment, paid me a great deal of attention, but he was an ugly, brutal-looking man, and I really hated him. There was a young Englishman, too, one of

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"Now, sir, take my advice and get out of Biddeford. Confidence rascals of your stamp are not wanted in our community."

Briek looked at Paxton blankly for a moment; then turned upon his heel and left the office.

The adventurer was seen no more in Biddeford.

It was on that very same afternoon that Nathan drove old Daddy Embden over to Deacon Paxton's.

"I want to see you on a leetle matter of business," the old man cried, as the deacon appeared at the front door, and Peleg got out quite nimbly.

"Come right in, Peleg," the deacon said.

"What is it?"

The two sat down in the parlor.

"Wal, fust an' foremost, is it true that your son, Sinclair, is going to marry that gal Liddy, as the paper says?"

"Yes, I believe that the report is true."

"Kinder sudden, ain't it?"

"Well, no; there's been a little love affair going on for some time, I think."

"Delia says she's a pretty nice gal."

"Yes; I've no objections to the match, although she is a poor girl."

"Who?"

"Why, this Miss Lydia," said the deacon, rather astonished at the question.

"She ain't poor!"

"No?"

"Got eighty-one thousand dollars, an' proper legal interest on that for seven years."

"The deuce you say!" exclaimed the deacon, betrayed into uttering an exclamation which savored more of the world than of the church.

"Fact, I've had the keer of her property ever since May, 1865. I've brought the documents all over with me, an' I want you to hold me to a proper account. There was just eighty-one thousand dollars, an' then the regular legal interest since 1865."

"But how did this money come in your hands?" Paxton asked, in astonishment.

"Wal, it's a long story, deacon," the old man replied, in some little confusion. "But the short of it is that his daddy intrusted it to me an' then he got killed an' I didn't know where the gal was, an'—Wal, in course, it don't matter much. I've got the money an' I want you to hold me right down to a strictly proper account, with legal interest." Then the old man took a large bundle of papers from his pocket.

"There's the hull thing figured out. Delie did it, an' I guess she's got it all straight, but if it ain't, I'll make it straight."

"But, Peleg, I don't see that I've got any thing to do with this affair. I am not the girl's guardian you know," the deacon said.

"But she's going to be your darter; so it's all in the family. Then, you know, deacon, she's a woman an' won't understand about bus'ness affairs. Now, you're a right smart business man, deacon, an' I want you to go over these papers an' hold me right down to the last cent, 'cos I may be an all-fired rascal, deacon, an' try to swindle the gal."

"Whatever you may have done, Peleg, I guess that you're all right in the future," the deacon said, kindly.

"That's gospel truth, deacon!" the old man said, solemnly. "I've heered in my time a sight of men who were powerful good at hollering for the gospel, but they ain't got it in their inwards like you have. Say, deacon, I've got a question to put to you 'bout this money. You know I've had it a putty long time, an' I've r'ally made more than proper legal interest out of it, say about eight or ten thousand dollars over; who does that belong to? I ain't very young now, deacon, an' I can't go back an' begin over again; then I got my darter, too, Delie; she's got the right religion, too; she r'asted with me when I was weak. She ain't very strong, an' these pesky sewing-machines are enough to kill a jackass, let alone the women-folks."

"All over and above the eighty-one thousand dollars, and the legal interest thereof, belongs to you, Peleg; you can keep it with a clear conscience. The steward is worthy of his hire. But, in regard to the papers, come to-night, when Sinclair will be home, and we'll run over them together."

"Much obliged, deacon," and the old man rose to depart.

"Not at all; you are heartily welcome, Peleg."

"Say, deacon!" cried the old man, suddenly, pausing in the doorway, "didn't you tell me once that you didn't believe in ghosts?"

"Well, I don't remember whether I ever told you so or not, but I certainly do not believe in them," the deacon answered.

"You're right, deacon, by hooky; there ain't any such things."

Then Embden climbed into the buggy, and Nathan drove off.

As the buggy ascended the hill on the Biddeford side, Embden suddenly addressed the driver.

"Say, Nathan, do you remember the night when you drove me along here an' thought I seed a ghost?"

"Wal, I calculate I do," Nathan replied.

"I thought you was goin' clean ravin' dis-tracted."

"You didn't see any thing, did you?"

"No, I guess not; only a couple of the mill-girls a-talking down at the corner of the street."

"One on 'em had on a straw hat an' a waterproof cloak?"

"Yes."

"Miss Liddy, that's goin' to marry Sin Paxton?"

"Wal, now that you speak of it, I guess it was." Nathan couldn't understand what the old man was driving at.

"That's my ghost," and Embden chuckled in great glee. "I used to know her father; he's dead an' gone now, an' I had no idee that either kith nor kin of his was 'round these parts. He used to wear a little straw hat, jest like the one she wears, an' in the dark, with that cloak wrapped around her, she looked jest like him. Tell you what, Nathan, I don't believe in spirits nohow."

Hollis swore outright that he wouldn't stay in Biddeford to see the woman he loved married to the man he hated; so up to Boston he went, and in a drunken fit shipped for a three years' voyage in a whaler, bound for the South Pacific.

The wedding Sunday came at last, and two couples went into the church single and came out married. Delia Embden became Mrs. Gardner, and Lydia Dallis, Mrs. Sinclair Paxton.

As they came from the church, a sudden thought occurred to Sinclair.

"That ivory picture?" he said.

"My father's portrait," she replied; "I did all I could to shake your faith, but it was firm as the rock."

"And the Saco's curse?" the deacon asked, as they sat in the parlor after tea.

"Has passed away," Sinclair replied; "the Indian blood has come again into the family. Lydia is a descendant of Randolph of Roanoke; the blood of Pocahontas is in her veins."

Our story is told. A strange girl is transformed into a happy wife, and so we leave her.

THE END.

Cassandra's Portrait.

JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

proved himself hasty and ungenerous, but she could readily pardon, believing these qualities to have been provoked through too selfish love for her.

The daylight faded gradually out. The sky flung out its myriad of twinkling lights, and a crescent moon threw a weird white gleam on the world below. With her heart-storm quelled, Cassandra lingered by a window, finding pleasure in the serene beauty of the night.

All at once her heart throbbed with a fierce tumult. She held her breath, and crouching back in the deeper shadows, gazed eagerly down the dim length of the room.

Out of the gloom came two figures, passing slowly, their footsteps making quiet echoes from the dust-covered floor. One was tall and dark and muscular, the other slight, with a lily-white face and a dropping shower of golden hair. The moonbeams touched them as they passed, and Cassandra read in Trevor's face—all aight with tender feeling—the truth of his sudden change toward herself. His vacillating nature had been taken captive by her uncle's penniless ward, Audrey Meer.

She staggered away, not daring to trust herself to a second sight of his devotion to her rival. Within her own chamber she dropped all effort at self-control. Up and down the room she raged like some untamed animal of the wood, one moment weeping and moaning, and wringing her hands hopelessly together, the next breathing anthemas through her clenched teeth, and destroying, in a blind fury, any of the fragile ornaments within the room which chanced to come in her way. A hot-blooded creature, with good impulses turned into wrong channels by injudicious management; she was a strange compound of good and ill, capable yet of expanding into a noble nature, or resolving into a baneful incarnation.

She took no note of time as it passed, but at last, at a sudden turn, caught a pair of glittering black eyes fixed upon her. The eyes were set in a yellow face, framed in by a narrow band of smooth hair, and a jaunty head-dress of ribbon and lace. It was her French maid Elise.

With an angry exclamation, Cassandra confronted her.

"How dare you come spying upon me? There, take that, and that; and if you're anxious for a dismissal without recommendation, try prying into my affairs again!"

With her hand she struck the woman a sharp blow on either cheek. The latter retreated a step, but said, quietly:

"Ma'm'selle will pardon, but dinner awaits! I come at monsieur's command, and rap, but there is no reply, therefore I make bold to enter. Will ma'm'selle be waited upon?"

"I was too impatient," admitted Cassandra.

Trevor turned his face a little more fully in the crimson glow that was already beginning to fade out of the western sky. He spoke without looking toward her, however; spoke bitterly, but with a decision that struck a hopeless conviction home to her heart.

"It's all over with, Cassandra! Your

melo-dramatic powers can never revive the trust which I have lost. Were you so wholly mine as I believed, you could not have used your arts to bedazzle another man; you would not have played with a heart which mine was held but a single degree higher, in that it was considered worthy to be retained. I don't pretend to remain utterly unscratched, but I am not a man to carry scars. Let me wish as happy a victory to you as I have won over myself."

His eyes were mocking her, and he held out his hand with the semblance of a smile upon his lips. She drew a little away, humble and pleading no longer. There was a white blaze of passion on her face, but she would not let him see the agony that wrung her very soul.

"At least let me justify myself, since you are not willing to accede me other than despicable motives. It was not my invitation that brought Lorraine here; it was merely to please my uncle that induced me to sit to him for my portrait. I have used no arts to win him, neither has he shown me any preference which could be construed into more than ordinary liking. You know in what manner I have run counter to my uncle's wishes hitherto; I believe that in throwing Lorraine and myself together he hoped to overrule my allegiance to you, and at last, consummate his scheme of seeing me united to his artist friend. The result will scarcely gratify him, since we remain mutually indifferent."

Trevor shrugged his shoulders, unconvinced.

"A Bohemian, and not a fortune-hunter? A dilettante in art, and not blinded by your radiance? A man of no means but refined tastes and expensive habits, does he hesitate to avail himself of this exceptional opportunity? Truly, there is yet a novelty left remaining under the sun."

Angry light flashed in Cassandra's eyes, but she could not bring a scornful retort to bear upon him. How weak a woman is while the man she has loved, or still loves, is not yet divested of all heroism, and straining ear, that not one of their low-slung syllables might escape her.

Trevor was pleading passionately, Audrey hesitating and undecided. She had no force of character, and while too weak to resist his impetuous will, yet would not give herself freely up to his guidance.

"You must decide, Audrey," Trevor cried at last. "It is now or never. Will you come with me, be my very own, to protect and cherish as my own life, or shall we part now and forever. The decision rests with you—and you will come, my darling?"

His voice dropped from impatient resolve to tender pleading again.

Thus driven to the wall, Audrey gave him her assurance:

"I will go with you, Mark."

"Then, at this time to-morrow night, meet me at our trysting-place in the old gallery. You have made me very, very happy, Audrey!"

They turned away, and Cassandra, watching them from her place of concealment, swallowed a choking sob, to cry out, in a fierce whisper:

"Poor, weak, pitiful fool! She can waver and hesitate, and I—would have given him my soul, had he asked it!"

She crept back to the house, all unconscious that a flitting shadow haunted her steps, that she who was keeping watch over the unsuspecting lovers, was herself under the surveillance of keen eyes.

Lorraine found her sadly distract when she sat to him next morning. There was infinite pity in his glance, a yearning, too, that he crushed down relentlessly when her gaze encountered his. He had probed her secret, and was not himself so indifferent as she had thought.

He laid down his brush, saying:

"One more day! Then your counterpart will require no longer, Cassandra."

He lingered over the utterance of her name, and a swift suspicion—the first that had come to her—assailed Cassandra. She was a creature of impulses, and yielded to one now.

"Then we'll number that one with the lost days. I will not sit again, the portrait shall never be completed. I will have it put away from sight, and hope it may be forgotten by others entirely, as it shall be by me."

And despite all entreaties she would have it so. Before noon a servant had deposited it in the deserted portrait-gallery, there to keep company with the ghosts of what had been.

Cassandra was brilliantly restless or unnaturally silent by turns all that day. When Elise came to dress her for the late dinner, she took note that the woman wore a neck ribbon of glistening azure, fastened by a little band of jet, and smiled at its incongruity with her yellow skin.

"Another present?" Cassandra asked, carelessly.

"Yes," replied Elise. "From Miss Audrey." And this time the glint in the black eyes was malignantly triumphant.

All was still in the house. Cassandra had been in her room for an hour, but, counting by her heart-throbs, it had seemed an age. At last, when eleven strokes

sounded from the little orrery clock on the mantelpiece, she stole stealthily out through the intervening distance of stair and hallway, straight on toward the trysting-place of the lovers, one hand stretched before her guiding herself through the darkness by touching the walls, the other clutching within the folds of her dress some object she could not even trust the blackness of the night to hide.

The gallery was only less dark with the starlight struggling in at the undraped windows, and just the tip of the crescent moon sending down a ghostly gleam, before it disappeared utterly from view. But her quick eyes had descried a flash as of a light suddenly extinguished, and springing forward, she could discern the outlines of two figures—a man's and a woman's.

Quick as thought, the hand that had been hidden in her dress was withdrawn, and dealt at them two forcible blows. The first, aimed at the man, drew an involuntary groan, and she felt the drip of warm blood from the blade she held; the second cut clean and clear a long, gaping rent through the canvas of her own portrait.

She staggered back amazed and incredulous.

A hand dropped from her arm, but it was Lorraine not Trevor who spoke.

"Cassandra! Was not that a blow in the dark in a double sense? Come away; there has been no one here to-night except myself—except it be your ruined semblance yonder, which I had almost invested with a spark of life."

She trembled, saying not a word until he emerged with her into the dim light shed by the swinging lamp in the main hall. Then she saw that he was deadly pale, and there was the ooze of blood upon his sleeve where the keen edge of her stiletto had penetrated. She gasped with horror, and clasped her hands over her eyes.

"I must have been mad," she said. "Can you ever forgive me?"

"If you will expiate your sin," he said, gravely.

Looking quickly up, her eyes fell again before his, but not until she had seen that the color had come back into his face, and a smile about his mouth belied his solemn tone.

After all, Lorraine was but a flesh-wound, and slight at that. Cassandra bound it for him, and they kept their own counsel.

Next morning Trevor and Audrey were missing, as Cassandra knew they would be. But some way the certain knowledge failed to affect her as the probability had done. She did not even seek to know what had changed their plans. Elise might have enlightened her, for it was she dogging the steps of her mistress, and fathoming the latter's motives, had given the lovers warning.

She took no note of time as it passed, but at last, at a sudden turn, caught a pair of glittering black eyes fixed upon her. The eyes were set in a yellow face, framed in by a narrow band of smooth hair, and a jaunty head-dress of ribbon and lace. It was her French maid Elise.

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THE SEXTON'S DEVOTION.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

He little only loved me, bottom-line.
For her sake what could I not dare,
What great deeds could I do?
I'd leap from off the topmost Alp,
To please her slightest whim;
I'd jump into the middle sea,
Although I can not swim.

I'd wear my toes out at the heels,
My shoes without a string,
And wear my elbows out at the knees,
And think I was a king.
I'd walk all day upon my head,
And wall upon my ears,
I'd bid farewell to every eye,
And wipe my weeping tears.

And if I thought an accom-
modation I would find,
To cold Spitzbergen's ice-cream shore,
And stay there till I die.

I'd plunge into Mount Aima's fire
To make her think me brave,
I'd slide across Niagara falls,
Or swallow the Mammoth cave.

I wouldn't be afraid to meet
A starving cataract.
And wouldn't be set back a bit
To meet an old account.

Sure, so outrageously I love
The charming little elf,
That if I knew 'twould please her well,
I'd go and hang myself.

Just in Time.
A WOMAN'S ADVENTURE.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

This adventure of mine, about which I am going to tell you, happened in 18—, when East Tennessee was infested with outlaws, guerrillas and bushwhackers; my husband was in the army, and with my two children, I stayed in our little mountain home, and tried to keep things from going wholly to ruin.

It was in the latter part of October when this adventure befell me. The night had shut down gloomily. The sky was full of clouds, which now and then parted a little, and at such times the moon would shine out with a feeble glimmer that only seemed to make darkness still darker.

I drew out the curtains across the little windows, barred the door, and sat down beside the fire, feeling unusually lonesome. Neighbors we had none, as the nearest family lived some five or six miles off. About nine miles away was a small village called Carnsville, where we usually went to trade when we had anything to trade with. Since the breaking out of the war, money had been very scarce, indeed, and we had to get along with what we could raise, mostly.

By and by Johnny, my youngest child, got sleepy, and I put him to bed. Willie got up and went out into the back room or kitchen, and I was left alone.

Presently I heard steps coming up toward the door, and I got up and went to the window, and drew the curtain and looked out.

A man was coming to the house. I dropped the curtain, and debated with myself about what it was best for me to do. Should I admit him? I knew the country was full of bushwhackers and outlaws, and we of the mountains lived in constant fear of them. Dreadful stories of their cruelty had come to us.

There came a faint knock.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"A refugee," was the reply. "I am trying to hide from guerrillas. Let me in, for God's sake, and give me something to eat."

His story might be true, and it might not. But I could do nothing to keep him out if he should be a guerrilla and determined to enter, and, if really a refugee, I had no desire to keep him out. So I unbarred the door, and let him in.

He was gaunt and footsore, and had a pale, haggard face, and I could not help pity him, as he sunk down, beside the fire, in the chair I placed for him, and held out his chilled hands to the warmth.

I went out into the kitchen and got him a bowl of milk and some bread and cold meat. Willie was asleep on the floor beside the kitchen-fire, and I did not wake him.

While the poor refugee was eating, with an appetite that seemed half-famished, he told me how for weeks he had been skulking about among the mountains, dodging the guerrillas, and waiting a chance to make his escape into the Union lines.

"You must not go away further to-night," I said, when he had got done eating. "I will give you a bed in the garret, and your breakfast in the morning, and then you will be better prepared to go on your journey toward safety."

I made him a bed in the garret, and he climbed up the ladder, which served us in the stead of stairs. By my direction he drew up the ladder after him, and shut down a little trap-door, thus cutting off all means of communication from below, and effectively hiding his retreat. I did not anticipate any visitors, but there was a possibility of their coming at any time, and some who might come I did not care to have known of the refugee's presence under my roof.

I cleared away the traces of the poor fellow's supper, and sat down to mend Johnnie's coat.

"Thump! thump! thump!"

I sprung up in alarm. Some one was knocking at the door for admittance. I heard gruff voices outside, and presently some one demanded to know "If I was goin' to wait all day afore I let him in?"

"Who are you?" I asked.

"That's nothin' to do with the case," answered a voice. "We want to come in, an' you'd better open this yere door, ef ye don't want it pounded down. That's what's the matter."

I hastily reasoned with myself that I could do nothing to keep them out, and so slid back the bar, and opened the door.

Two ruffianly-looking men entered. I knew at once that they were border outlaws.

"We want some supper—Bill an' I reckon. Step about lively, woman. We're most starved," said one of them to me.

"Seen any thing of a man skulkin' 'bout these yere diggin's lately?" asked the other.

"You are the first two men I have seen in a long time," I answered, evasively. "Sit down, and I will get you something to eat."

"An' mind yer spry about it, too," said the first speaker. "We're goin' to stay with you to-night, an' we want suthin' to eat afore we go to bed, like any other gen-

lemen, hey, Bill?" and they laughed over the feeble attempt at wit as I left the room and went into the kitchen.

Suddenly a plan flashed through my mind. Immediately in front of the door opening into this back room was a large opening through the floor, into the cellar below. A ladder led down from the room above. Why could I not remove this ladder, and manage to get them into the cellar? There I should have them safe.

I hastily got some ham and sat it on the fire, where it was soon sizzling.

Then I opened the trap-door, and leaned it back against the wall. I laid a few thin, light strips of pine kindling across the opening in the floor, after carefully drawing up the ladder, and putting it out of sight. Then I spread a piece of old rag carpet over these strips, and no one would have suspected that the least weight on the carpet would cause what appeared to be solid floor to give way and open a yawning chasm into the depths below.

Then I woke up Willie, and told him what I was going to do. I stationed him behind the door, ready to fling the trap-door down to its place the moment the men went down through the hole in the floor—if my plan succeeded. If it did not succeed—I did not dare to think of that! It must succeed.

Then I hastily drew out an old table, clattered some dishes about on it, and then, while my heart was beating like a trip-hammer, I opened the door between the rooms, and called them to supper.

They got up and came toward me. I knew I was deadly pale. I shivered as if with cold.

The foremost one stepped unsuspectingly upon the carpet, his companion close behind him. Down he sunk, immediately, and so suddenly, so unexpectedly, that he had no time to make an effort to save himself. The other one strove to avoid the danger, and clutched at the side of the aperture, but I stamped on his hands in a wild excitement, and he unloosed his hold and fell after his comrade to the bottom of the cellar. Willie dropped the door, and they were prisoners. I could hear them cursing me, but I didn't care for that.

"Willie," I said, "do you think you can take Dobbin and go to Carnsville?"

"Of course I can," he said, bravely.

"Then go," I said. "Ride fast, for life may be at stake. Get help. Go to Mr. Plofeld's, and tell him of our danger. Have him send some one back with you immediately."

Five minutes after I heard him ride away.

I was joined by the poor refugee, who had been listening to what was going on below, half frightened to death at the danger he had got me into, if he should happen to be discovered. It would be death to him, or something worse, he knew, but he cared less for that than for the consequences of my concealing and sheltering him, which would be visited on me, were the ruffians to get us in their power.

"Go!" I cried. "Don't stay a minute. You can get away from danger before they can get out. There is a wall of earth five or six feet deep between them and freedom."

"I will not leave you," he said, firmly. "After your kindness to me, I will not desert you in this time of peril."

And I could not make him alter his determination.

The cellar was in the middle of the kitchen and front room, and was much smaller than the house. Between the top of the cellar and the floor it was filled in for five or six feet all about the edge of it with stones and dirt. The only way for the men to get out was by digging through this embankment, and I knew that they could not dig very rapidly in the hard clay and among the stones.

Pretty soon I heard a stone fall into the cellar-bottom, and I knew that they had commenced their work of digging themselves into freedom.

How slowly the clock ticked; the hands hardly seemed to move. It would be three or four hours before Willie would be back. If we could only keep them until help came.

Eleven, and twelve, and one struck, and we could hear the stones fall into the bottom of the cellar. If they had nothing but their hands to dig with, I knew they could make slow progress, but they might succeed in getting out before assistance came, after all.

It was a long and lonesome vigil—that of the refugee's and mine. It seemed longer than any week ever did to me before.

The hands of the clock were wearing toward two.

Suddenly my companion started, and a cry escaped his lips.

I looked toward him. He pointed to the window. I looked that way, and saw two devilish faces peering in at us, with fiendish triumph and delight in their brutal features.

My God! The ruffians had escaped from the cellar, and what would become of us?

"So you ain't seen any men 'round lately, hey? Yer a cu' 'un, old lady; but I reckon we'll have a stop to yer comin' any more o' yer tricks on us," cried Bill, as they came in. "This yere's the very sneak we ha' been huntin' for; an' the old lady had him hid away summers, I reckon. Durned if we don't pay you back in a right smart sort o' way, old woman, for yer trick on us. Hand down that rope, Bill."

Bill took down a clothes-line from a nail, and handed it to his companion. I was speechless, paralyzed, at the awful danger before me.

"We'll hang up the old lady to dry on her own clothes-line," laughed Bill, as he adjusted the rope over a beam, "then we'll tend to the other customer. I swear, if he ain't goin' to faint!" he added, as the poor, weak, frightened man turned ghastly white, and sunk down, insensible, on the floor. I did not wonder at it, in the least. His sufferings had worn him all out, and he was weak as any child.

He put the rope around my neck, and all the time I was motionless, as if frozen with terror. Then, as Bill ordered the other to "put up on her," a merciful unconsciousness came to me.

"When I came to myself, a familiar voice was calling my name.

"John!" I cried, "is it you? Are we both dead?"

"No, not dead," answered my husband.

"You came pretty near being dead, though."

Then they told me all about it. Willie had found a regiment of infantry in Carnsville. His father's regiment, as it happened, and some men had been sent to our assistance, under John's charge. They had reached there just as the ruffians were drawing up the rope to hang me.

"Lay aloft, you sons of freedom!" cried

"And they—"

"Have been taken to Carnsville, where they will be tried," answered John. "Tomorrow you shall be taken to a place where you can live in safety." And the next day we left our mountain home, and the refugee accompanied us. Safety had come to him when he expected death.

Forecastle Yarns.

BY C. D. CLARK.

RUNNING THE GANTLET.

WE were coming down from the fishing-grounds, a little late in the season, full to the hatches with prime oil. The fishing had been good in the Arctic, and the captain would not come while the fish were so plenty, although he knew the danger of staying too long in the northern seas; and the sailors, proverbially careless of danger, only thought that each fish towed alongside added to the value of their "lay." The sea was beginning to show signs of coming danger, and was full of floating blocks of ice and floes, but as yet not enough to give serious cause for apprehension. There was always danger at sea, and especially in the whale-fishery; that we well knew, but that we were in immediate danger, no one would believe. We had a good ship and kind officers, who always took their share in any danger, cheerfully and bravely, as officers should. If it had been otherwise, the men would have been clamorous, long before, for them to take the ship out of those seas. They would have smelled danger then, on the

water full now, however, and were to sail early next day for the South Pacific, there to winter. The men were crowding over the pleasant days they were to spend among the delightfully immoral inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, and thinking of the quantity of *Poe* they would stow away when once at Tahiti. But their dreams were broken that night by a call to the deck, and an order to make sail at once. They understood the danger now; the wind had shifted, and was blowing quite strongly from the south-west. All those floating fragments which had been passing them for many days would be driven back upon them, crowding them in upon that desolate coast; and if that was done it meant, the prows of the ship had just passed into the open sea, when we felt her tremble through her oaken frame, and we were lifted bodily from the water, hung there a moment, and then shot forward as if launched from the ways into the tossing waves beyond.

It was a beautiful clear night, such as we see only in the frigid zone. The pale moon beamed full upon the turrets and pinnacles of towering icebergs, already bearing down upon us in majestic beauty for our destruction. "A dozen were in sight, all tending toward the coast, and threatening us in their dumb strength. We must get out of this—we must clear the Cape, forty miles distant, or we were doomed. Every man was on deck and at his station, for we knew that it needed quick hands and willing hearts to save us now, and to avoid the bergs in our path. Two of the best men were at the wheel, and the first mate, a stalwart old whaler, conned the ship and gave orders. Again and again we seemed about to foul one of these ice-mountains; but, as often, the prompt order of the mate carried us out of danger, and the white mass passed us by on its way to the coast. It was a magnificent sight, but full of peril, for we knew that many a ship had been crushed by the sudden overturning of one of these floating hills.

"Twill be tough and go if we clear the Cape," I heard the captain whisper to the second mate. "The ice is coming in fast, now, and if the floe gets ahead of us, it will be all we can do to save the ship."

"Can't we carry a little more sail, captain?" said the mate, uneasily.

"It won't do now. We are carrying all we dare in this sea, for it is hard to avoid the bergs, as it is."

"Hard-a-starboard!" yelled the first mate.

The prow of the ship receded from a great 'berg we were approaching, and we fairly seemed to fly. The next moment the iceberg bowed its mighty head and went down, with a great surge and splash, some of its pinnacles striking the water scarcely a hundred yards astern. The base came up from the depths of the sea, and the great mass sailed on its way.

We ran north ten miles, for we needed that much offing to weather the Cape, and then headed south-west by west. We were now going through the water at the rate of ten knots an hour, scattering the spray before us, while the bumping of small cakes of ice against our sides told us that the run was coming down rapidly.

It was a night of toil and danger, but when morning came we were close to the Cape, and as we looked seaward a cry burst from every lip, as our danger became apparent.

Two miles of blue sea were clear, but beyond that, we saw the ice-field stretching away to the distant horizon, tossing under the rays of the rising sun. A vast white surface, broken and irregular, where great blocks had been forced through the face of the field in various positions, coming down before the wind toward the point which we desired to pass, and we had yet some miles to go before we could clear it. Captain Lawton sprang up on the capstan and looked out, and then spoke to the men.

"Boys!" he cried, his clear voice ringing out like the blast of a trumpet, "you can see the danger as well as I. There is time yet for us to go about and make a winter harbor, before the field can strike us, but I think the chances about even whether we clear the Cape or not. As many as are in favor of taking the chances, hold up the right hand."

A cheer broke from the lips of the crew and every hand came up, and a smile was seen upon the face of the captain.

"You have voted as I wish, boys. Be brisk, Mr. Frazer: set the studding-sails and shake out every thing which will draw, for what we want is speed, now."

"Lay aloft, you sons of freedom!" cried

the first mate. "Jump! Away you go, now!"

The masts and yards were quickly black with moving forms, and the ship was dashing through the water with every sail set. We needed speed now, as the captain said. If we could pass through that rapidly-narrowing line of water, all would be well.

If not—well, we must take the chances. The Sea Horse was a fast ship; we trusted in her, and the stout vessel actually seemed to feel it. The slightest touch of the helm was obeyed, and we dashed into the opening between the ice and the Cape at a fearful speed, but, fast as we went, we could see the space of dark water narrowing foot by foot. There was no chance for retreat now, when we had once passed into the trap. There was no room for beating, and we could not get back against the wind in any other way. Captain Lawton maintained his position upon the capstan-head, watching the approach of the great field, but not a muscle in his stern face moved as he noted the fearful rapidity with which the ice was closing in. He gave his orders without a change in voice or attitude, and by his gallant conduct kept up the spirits of the men. But our danger was increasing at every moment. To clear the mile of the passage which remained before we could reach the open sea while the ice-field passed over a quarter of the distance, was the problem. Although the speed of the ship was tremendous, yet to us she seemed to crawl, and but for the tell-tale log-line we should have said that we hardly moved, yet the tall masts were bending under the weight of the heavy sails, and it seemed as if the canvas would be torn from the bolts—yet they held!

Still the ice-field came on slowly, majestically, driving before it a frightened herd of seal. The rending of the ice, the crash of falling icebergs—the barking of the seal—all mingled in strange confusion, and yet that narrow path to safety grew narrower still. Looking ahead, we saw the open sea, not three hundred yards away, but scarcely the ship's length between the field and the ice along the shore! Every man held his breath, for he knew that the moment of direst peril had come. The mate sprang into the chains and shouted his orders in a harsh, strained voice. The ice closed in; the prow of the ship had just passed into the open sea, when we felt her tremble through her oaken frame, and we were lifted bodily from the water, hung there a moment, and then shot forward as if launched from the ways into the tossing waves beyond.

We looked back, now that safety was assured, and saw that the passage through which we had come was utterly obliterated, and that the ice-field was already piling it self up on the shore in the utmost confusion. I have passed many hours of peril, but